

# **PROMOTION OF JUDGES**

The discipline of Equitation welcomes you, and thanks you for your interest

We have created this handbook to simplify and clarify the process which an Equitation judge is expected to follow in order to move through the levels as they become more experienced and proficient.

Equitation Judges are divided into four Panels. They are:

- Candidate Learner Panel
- Learner Panel
- Provincial Panel (divided into 3 different levels – C, B and A)
- National Panel

## **CANDIDATE LEARNER PANEL**

1. An application form (available from your Regional Body) must be completed and returned to the Regional Body concerned.
2. Your name will then be added to the Candidate Learner Panel.
3. You will be required to become a member of your Regional Body.
4. You are required to purchase an up-to date Rule Book and Test Book.
5. You are required to secretary at least six times (depending on your personal experience and proficiency)
6. You will be given an Activity Sheet, on which you must keep a record of these engagements.

7. You will be notified of seminars and workshops, which you are encouraged to attend. This must also be noted on your activity sheet.
8. All candidates **MUST** have experience in working in the official's office, carrying out the duties of announcing, recording, spotting, assisting with the horse swap, correlating mark sheets for collection by the competitors, preparing the judge's files and any other necessary paperwork, allocating vests etc.
9. When you feel you have enough confidence to proceed to the next level, you may apply to the Regional Equitation committee to sit your Learner Judge exam.
10. You can expect this process to take between 1-2 years.
11. On passing this you will be promoted to the Learner Judges Panel.
12. You are not allowed to judge whilst on this Panel.

## **LEARNER PANEL**

1. Once on this panel you are encouraged to "sit in" with various judges to gain a well rounded knowledge of terminology and experience on how the competition works. Please note that while you sit in you may not interrupt or question the judge at any time during the period that they are judging. You are encouraged to discuss the class with them after the event. Please request permission from the judge and show organiser first before you go in to the arena. Protocol dictates that you must then stay for the entire class.
2. You may also be assessed as a "dummy" judge from the side of the arena, where your marks will not count, and you will not be required to display your score.
3. Learner judges should be able to describe and set up a basic equitation course for all movements as well as a basic gymnastic. They should also know distances between combinations.

4. Learner judges may only judge Training and Novice classes alone. They may judge Intermediate classes if accompanied by an A Panel or National panel judge.
5. Constructive suggestions from new Learner judges should be encouraged.
6. Based on your progress and former experience you will either be invited, or you may apply to write the Judges examination. This examination will include a practical assessment by a senior judge. This written exam will be assessed by two senior judges, or the technical committee. If you pass this you will be promoted to the Regional C Panel.

## **REGIONAL PANELS C, B AND A**

1. Regional Judges are subdivided into Panel A, B and C. These panels are revised annually by the Regional Equitation Committee concerned. You are advised to keep your activity sheets up to date.
2. Regional C Panel Judges may judge alone at Intermediate level and below, but may not judge Open level.
3. Regional B Panel judges may judge alone at Intermediate level and below. They may judge at Open level accompanied by a National judge.
4. Regional A Panel may judge any competition below a Regional Championship either alone or accompanied by another judge.

## **NATIONAL PANEL**

1. Judges are required to be on the Regional A panel, to have judged out of Region and to have attended seminars.
2. It is up to you to make yourself available to judge out of Region. This may have to be at your own expense.
3. Recommendations , (deletions and additions) are discussed and finalised at the National Equitation Committee meeting held annually.
4. National Judges may judge any competition alone or with another judge

## **PROTOCOL FOR JUDGES.**

### **MAKING A COMMITMENT**

- ✓ Diarise judging appointment dates that you accept, so that they are not overlooked.
- ✓ If you are unable to keep your commitment and cancel within a week before your scheduled engagement, you should undertake to find a replacement judge acceptable to the organizing body.
- ✓ If you are unavailable to judge for a period of time, let the authorities know
- ✓ Keep yourself informed and up to date; be aware of any changes to the rules
- ✓ Attend seminars regularly; judge regularly and only refuse appointments for valid reasons
- ✓ Make sure your Horse Society has your current address and telephone number.

## **EQUIPMENT AND PREPARATION**

- ✓ Always carry an up to date Rule Book and Test Book
- ✓ Prepare for the day by familiarizing yourself with the test and movements required.
- ✓ Have suitable diagrams of how the test should be executed. Never be arrogant enough to think that this is not a necessity.

## **REPORTING FOR DUTY**

- ✓ Report to the Show Director promptly – preferably a half an hour before the class is scheduled to start.
- ✓ Check the arena surface, surrounds, jumping equipment and layout of same to see if the test requirements are able to be met.
- ✓ The senior judge must co-ordinate with the announcer and recorder as to how the tests will be called, and in which order of judges the scores will be called (in the event of two or more judges). It must also be clarified as to whether the minus marks are to be called before or after the scores.
- ✓ Introduce yourself to your secretary and explain how you like your remarks noted and your style of judging. For example “circle“ can be replaced with a “O” etc.
- ✓ Check that you have the order of riding and correct paperwork.
- ✓ Visit the cloakroom before you start judging.
- ✓ Establish your judging position before the competitors walk the course. Make sure that you can see the whole arena – be prepared to stand up if it gives you a better line of sight.
- ✓ Judges should spread around the arena.
- ✓ Do not sit in a position where you can see the other judges’ scores before they are held up. This might not influence you, but may give the wrong perception to the public.

## **WALKING THE COURSE**

- ✓ Before walking, please check with the Course Designer first to see if the course is ready.
- ✓ The course should not be opened until the judges have walked and indicated their positions.
- ✓ All of the judges and spotter should walk together, and clarify or identify any possible contentious or unclear situations.
- ✓ Ask the announcer to announce any of these in order to avoid any problems up front. For example, if it is unclear as to which jumps are related, get the announcer to let the competitors know which the correct ones are before they walk the course.
- ✓ If there are any changes required to the construction of jumps, do NOT make these changes yourself, even if a pole needs rolling – please liaise with the Course Designer. They are the experts and it is their responsibility to make alterations. Be sensitive and polite if they have missed putting in a test or the distances on the gymnastics are incorrect.
- ✓ Leave it up to the senior judge to discuss distances or heights with the Course Designer. You need to be knowledgeable and experienced in distances (and tact) to do this.
- ✓ In the event that a learner/observer judge requests to sit in, please ensure that they have had permission from the show organiser and senior judge.
- ✓ You are allowed to answer questions from the competitors regarding the course – again, if it will avoid confusion let the announcer tell all the competitors the answer.
- ✓ Use this opportunity to decide on the best track you are going to judge.
- ✓ Pace out distances in related lines and combinations and identify the test that the Course Designer has set- this will determine your score as far as how the rider has coped with the course, not just individual fences.

- ✓ Ascertain the best way that you would expect the rider to plan their flatwork in order to flow from Part One to Part Two.
- ✓ Plan the whole test – check Part Three and Four where applicable.

## **WHILE JUDGING**

- ✓ Judges must guard against unsolicited information from anyone regarding the competitors or horses.
- ✓ Do not allow yourself to be influenced by comments from your secretary or scores from other judges.
- ✓ Ensure that all judges hold their scores up simultaneously on the request of the announcer. This shows confidence as well as dispels any doubt as to whether judges are “waiting to see” what each other’s scores are.
- ✓ Make constructive remarks,
- ✓ If you have made a huge mistake – be big enough to admit it. Walk up to the judge’s box straight away and explain to the announcer why you need to change your score. Whilst this needs to be avoided, everyone is human.
- ✓ If you have a learner judge with you, you may explain your marks to them but this must NOT interrupt your concentration or compromise the competitor in any way.
- ✓ The senior judge (or spotter) will make the final decision on technical issues such as elimination, error of course and rule interpretation. This is the only instance in which judges should confer during a part of a competition.
- ✓ The welfare of the horse is paramount, and decisions taken (i.e. lameness, cruelty, abuse etc.) should be taken with the interest of the horse first, and the fairness of the competition, in mind.
- ✓ Make sure your cellphone is switched off before you commence judging.

## **AFTER THE CLASS**

- ✓ Scores /marks should never be changed after the test completion unless it involves an error of course discrepancy.
- ✓ Judges are entitled to ask the recorder to check the scores if there is the slightest cause of concern.
- ✓ It is always a good idea for the senior judge to check the scores before the final results are announced for a Championship.
- ✓ Judges must sign the result sheet at the end of the class.
- ✓ You are encouraged to discuss differences of marks with fellow judges. This must, however, be done in private. The purpose of this should be to grow in experience and not to try to assert your opinion or defend yourself. It must be seen as an exchange of ideas and opinions in a professional manner. You do not have to agree on reasons, nor do you have to decide on who is more correct.
- ✓ You must make yourself available to competitors to discuss their judging sheet. Never discuss another competitor's marks,
- ✓ Be professional and show loyalty to your fellow judges. Integrity dictates that judges should never discuss or criticize each other's scores or comments with anyone other than the judge concerned, and this must be done in private.

## **OBJECTIVES OF A JUDGE**

- ✓ To find the *correct results* of the class judged
- ✓ To work fairly and from an unbiased point of view – judge what you see on the day with a fresh eye
- ✓ To make constructive criticism
- ✓ To be authoritative, yet friendly and approachable
- ✓ Remember, you have a responsibility to your discipline and to the sport in general

## **DRESS**

- ✓ Neatly - competitors turn out well, so should you.
- ✓ Conservatively
- ✓ Shirts and trousers suits are appropriate for woman, as are suits or trousers and jackets for men.
- ✓ A hat looks good

## **CONDUCT**

- ✓ The welfare of the horse is paramount.
- ✓ Be pleasant and polite to show organisers and competitors
- ✓ Be professional – do not socialise with the competitors on the day
- ✓ Be punctual – arrive at least 30 minutes before the class, and report to the show director
- ✓ Be loyal to the discipline. Make criticism ‘in house’ to the people who can effect changes, not to the public.
- ✓ Be supportive of other judges and their comments, especially in public
- ✓ Remember that the sport is bigger than any individual
- ✓ Always strive for the right result.
- ✓ Decisions should always be made with the fairness of the competition in mind
- ✓ Judges should always be seen to be impartial.
- ✓ Knowledge of the rules movements and protocol will give you the ability to judge with confidence.
- ✓ Accept that you do not know everything - be receptive to new ideas and points of view.
- ✓ Be humble and accept that you are human, but also have confidence in your ability as a judge.

## **WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

- ✓ The winner of the class should be someone who you would like to work your own horse
- ✓ An all round horseman, who rides correctly both on flat and over fences
- ✓ A talented rider who has 'feel', a good 'eye', and educated 'seat' and 'hand', and rides with balance and sympathy.
- ✓ A polished rider, who is well turned out, familiar with the test and lays it out symmetrically, making a harmonious picture, making things look easy even when they aren't
- ✓ A winner who is talented and polished, remembering that everyone can be polished but not everyone has talent.